May 2006

DIG

S MAG

EXPRESSING EMOTIONS

Retiring Professor Explains the Meaning Behind His Clothing

A Crack Motel's Complacent Prisoners

× CSULB Actress Shares the Stage

× Studying Art in Italy Lowers One Student's Inhibitions

EDITOR'S LETTER

May is the time of year freshmen have finally mastered the art of passing G.E. classes without ever going, how to get by on minimum wage and off-campus living can be cheaper than dorming it. May is stressful, yet exhilarating for graduating seniors as we send out last minute resumes for perfect careers that will supposedly provide stability and a good life. But instead of worrying about the future and trying to conquer her final semester, writer Elena Encarnación immersed herself in the world most of us know little about. On free will and a twist of fearlessness, Encarnación refused to leave the so-called crack motel before getting to know the people whose stories she wanted to tell. Though her quest did not end with "Checking in to Addiction," Encarnación realizes there is no conclusion until these motel-dwellers help themselves.

Whether a writer is uncovering a story close to his or heart or exposing truth behind the he said/she said of Professor Springer's fashion choices, the ability to tell peoples' personal stories is my motivation as a journalist and writer. As I leave in search of a larger world and unique stories, I am happy to leave a great year of Dig to a new group of enthusiastic student writers and editors who will continue to make the magazine thrive. So congratulations on completing another semester, may we run into each other in the real world.

Lauren Nelson

Lauren Nelson,
Editor in Chief

DIG
CSULB'S MAG

Editor in Chief **Lauren Nelson**

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Contributing Writers

Elena Encarnación Nicole Yoder
Stewart Hidalgo Kambria Fischer
Tiana Fries Ilan Cloud
Gabrielle Kent

Contributing Photographers

Vishal Goklani JR Goleno

Cover photo: Professor Arnold Springer at his home in Venice. Photo by JR Goleno.

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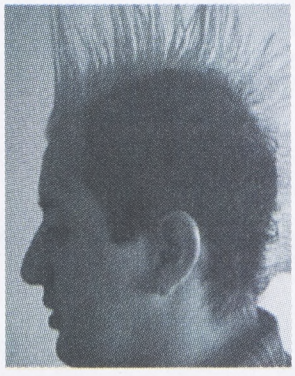
Editorial
1250 Bellflower Blvd. SSPA 030
Long Beach, CA 90804-4601
(562) 985-7984 fax: (562) 985-5053
digmag_csulb@yahoo.com

Business/Advertising
1250 Bellflower Blvd. SSPA 010B
Long Beach, CA 90804-4601
(562) 985-5736 fax: (562) 985-1740

Contributors

Gabrielle Kent

It doesn't matter if she's making guacamole or pasta, her excuse for using garlic is always the same: "I'm Italian." But this hospitality management major held herself back from the garlic and brought out a few other toppings, seasonings and sauces that will turn ordinary ham and cheese sandwiches into gourmet paninis perfect for quick final's week meals.



Stewart Hidalgo

Stewart Hidalgo, a fourth-year print journalism major lives for motorcycles, camping and music. Next year he plans to continue his studies in music engineering and recording local bands. His motto: "I'm a hustler baby. I just want you to know. It ain't where I've been, but where I'm 'bout to go."

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THE GRADUATE'S DILEMMA:

Climb the Corporate Ladder or Follow Your Heart?

By Stewart Hidalgo

As the year comes to a close and graduating seniors try not to sleep through commencement, many students are second-guessing themselves and wondering if they will use the degree they just spent four-plus years obtaining. For some, it is a question of money: What if you love writing, but worry it might not pay the bills? For others, it is a question of enjoyment: What if your degree is in finance, but you'd rather work with people?

Raul Reis, a Cal State Long Beach journalism professor, says a lack of information keeps students in majors where they don't necessarily want to work.

"It happens often that people get into college and don't even know what kind of classes they will be taking or what kind of jobs they will be getting after they graduate," Reis said.

He says students in high school should be given more specific information about majors so they can make better decisions once they get to college.

But even if a student chooses a major he or she enjoys, college loans and the increasing cost of living loom around the corner after graduation. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, starting salary for a liberal arts major is $30,337. This seems hardly enough for recent graduates who will soon have to pay back loans and live in a major city like Los Angeles where average home prices are close to $500,000.

Finding a job that pays well is a challenge for Luis Moisa, 23, a graduate from Devry University with a bachelor's degree in technical management. As the technology boom has dwindled in the last few years, companies are not offering high paying jobs for recent graduates.

'It happens often that people get into college and don't even know what kind of classes they will be taking or what kind of jobs they will be getting after they graduate.'

"The I.T. field requires four years of experience with a degree and that is a for an entry level job," Moisa said regarding the complications of getting hired.

Another issue employees face in this field of work is lack of job security. Some companies offer contracts that only last one or two years. With the bleak outlook in his field, Moisa has decided to stay at his current position as an operational manager for a small chain restaurant.

It is a similar story for those with other majors.

Crystal A. Claussen, 20, is a junior at CSULB with a double major in journalism and creative writing. She has a passion for writing, but feels that once she graduates there will not be a job waiting for her. She also says her classes have not been what she expected.

At this point she does not plan on pursuing a career with her majors because it's "not a lucrative field." Currently, she works for Best Buy and is looking to further further her career with the company or find a position as a secretary.

Luckily, a college education is worth something. On average, a person working full time with a bachelor's degree earns close to $20,000 more each year than a person with a high school degree, according to the U.S. Department of Education. For most, a bachelor's degree provides an advantage in the job field even if used in a different area.

Students are able to find information about jobs at the Career Development Center where there are over 600 different jobs titles.

"Selecting their major is the first step," said Peggy Murphy Hayden, CDC program coordinator. "We help them after that."

Photo: A student's dream job may not always match his or her dream salary, so some may resort to lifeguarging with a business degree or working at Best Buy with a degree in English. Photo by Angela Mejia.

Checking in to Addiction

Beside the middle-class suburbs of Long Beach sit crack motels, where residents' complacency in addiction to sex and drugs continually feed each other.

By Elena Encarnación

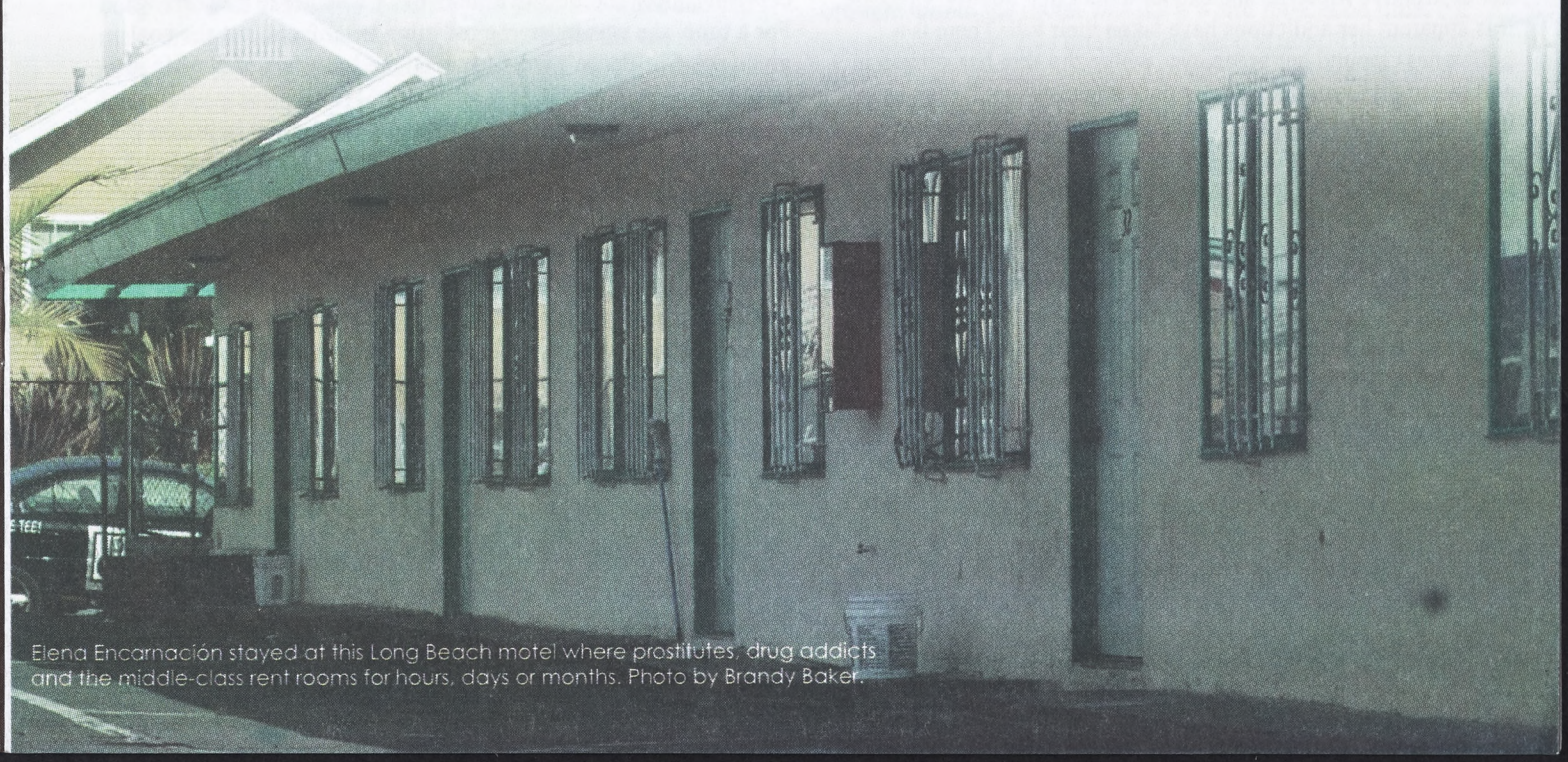
It's a beautiful day in Long Beach. It rained yesterday, so the sky is washed clean and crystal blue. A woman wearing a sweater and jeans stands on a corner at a payphone. Her blonde hair, minus a few loose tresses, is pulled back in a ponytail. If she were standing on the other side of Pacific Coast Highway, where a group of new, pristine town homes have been erected, one might think she is a soccer mom. But instead, she is on a corner having a conversation with a man in a bomber jacket standing six feet away. They communicate covertly and briefly, looking in opposite directions, rarely glancing at each other. She anxiously loiters in the parking lot until a second man walks past and slips a package into her hand. She tucks it into her pocket; and it becomes obvious there will not be a white picket fence where she is headed.

This woman I call Soccermom locks herself up in a motel room, a lodging that lives up to the reputation precluded by its low rates and crumbling, dingy décor. Some stay here for an hour or two, some for an entire night; but this is where she lives. It is home to many, most of whom are one or more of the following: drug dealers, drug whores, drug addicts, the depressed, the demented or displaced. But this motel is no aberration. It is one of eight such motels located on Pacific Coast Highway between the avenues of Redondo and Cherry, bordering the quiet city of Signal Hill to the south and extending west from the Long Beach middle class neighborhood of Los Altos, all catering to the same clientele and vices.

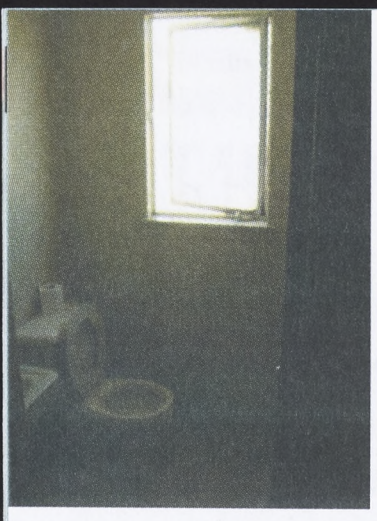
These motels fill the outskirts of middle class suburbs the nation over. They are called fleabag motels, seedy motels or crack motels. Whatever you call them, the idea is the same; they are establishments of ill repute where you can check in any time you want, but for many, leaving is not so easy.

Tattered curtains hang in windows, clinched closed to conceal the dirt and secrets each room has to tell—tales of drugs, sex, poverty and how they all intertwine in a miserable, addictive mess.

When I was 17, I caught a glimpse of what lies behind these curtains. A friend and I needed a place to stay for the night, and at $20 a night, the price was right. But instead of staying in our own room, we were invited next door, where we spent the rest of the night with a surrogate family of drug addicts, who aside from exposing us to drug use, took it upon themselves to look after two naive girls who had wandered into the wrong place. Years later, I am unable to forget those people or that place. So, I have decided to visit another crack motel, as a journalist this time, to write



Elena Encarnación stayed at this Long Beach motel where prostitutes, drug addicts and the middle-class rent rooms for hours, days or months. Photo by Brandy Baker.



about this foreign world.

After being here only a few nights I met a young man named Jay who, after determining I wasn't at the motel to "make some money," asked why I was here. I explain I want to write a story about these motels and the people living here.

"But everyone knows about motels," he said. "Everyone's stayed in a motel when they go on vacation."

I thought about this. When I was a child, motels were exciting places because they represented travel and vacation. But on my twenty-third night in this place, I realize that what goes on here is the opposite of vacation, the opposite of recreation.

My room was not pleasant when I checked in. It smelled like an ashtray. The chairs, originally blue, were turning black with filth. The shower curtain was spawning a jungle of mildew. The only thing in the room that wasn't worn and stained I found in the nightstand—the Bible, which sat untouched, without a crack in its binding or a single crease on any page.

My window overlooks the motel and store parking lot. For the first few days of my stay, I would look out my window, watching the drug and prostitution transactions. From a distance, I tried to identify the major players. Soccermom was the first person I noticed.

Soccermom was a heroin addict and a prostitute. In spite of her destructive lifestyle, she exudes a maternal quality. Up close, it is apparent her addictions have taken their toll. There is a hollowness around her green eyes where the skin has sunken in and the slight asymmetry of her nose suggests that it may have been broken. She tries to cover blemishes with makeup badly suited for her complexion. Soccermom doesn't like the way she looks. She won't say her age; however, I would guess she is about 40.

She normally turns tricks all day to support herself and her boyfriend who doesn't work. She supports his habit, but he shows no gratitude. He ridicules her for her fading looks, not because of his own superficial standards but because her depreciating appearance is bad for business, and when business is bad, his veins go hungry.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) says there are nearly 900,000 chronic heroin users in the United States, and Soccermom and her boyfriend are two of them, according to Johnny, the liquor store clerk and Jackie, a resident of the motel who has known Soccermom for three years. Heroin is the most widely used of the opiate drugs—narcotics processed from morphine intended to sedate pain and evoke euphoria. In the past, heroin use has increased because its price has decreased, according to the NIDA. In Long Beach, a fix could cost as little as $10.

Heroin can be sniffed or smoked, but since the onset of euphoria is quickest when taken intravenously, Soccermom and her boyfriend opt to inject it, using any syringes they can find, regardless of where they come from. Some of her infections come from the dirty needles. Her boyfriend, who sometimes shoots up from underneath his toenails, says his toenails have started to fall off.

While both have a serious addiction that, if not fed, could result in crippling withdrawal pains, the boyfriend's fix always comes first. When Soccermom has completed her last trick of the night, her boyfriend takes her money, and minus the daily $55 room rate, he spends her earnings on heroin and often crack cocaine. When there is only enough heroin to satisfy one appetite, Soccermom goes without.

Jackie, who doesn't want to reveal her last name, struts through the parking lots during the day, wearing the same black leather jacket and barely-there miniskirt. A mother of four and grandmother of eight, the 47-year-old has an exuberance and friendly fervency that hides her terminal illness.

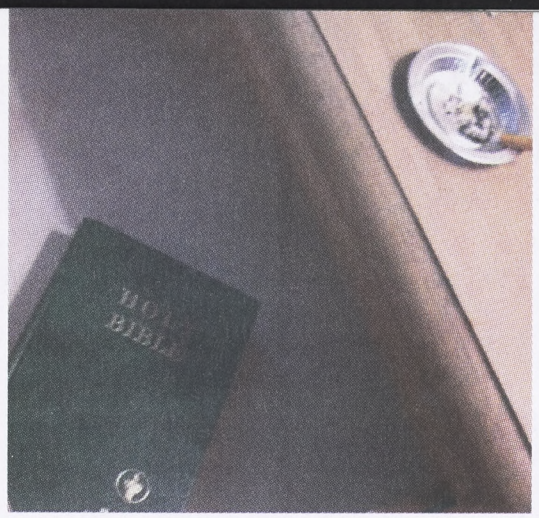
Jackie has lived at the motel for three years with her alcoholic boyfriend. She smokes crack cocaine to cope with the pain of cervical cancer and fibroid tumors that cause her to hemorrhage. For a time, she was receiving radiation treatments, but she has given up. She doesn't want to spend the last years of her life in a hospital.

She said she doesn't want to spend her last years in prison either, but she could be headed there. She has been charged with selling drugs and has a trial approaching. She claims she is innocent, but admits that she sells from time to time. For $30, Jackie can make a $220 profit.

"I'm not going to live much longer," she said. "I don't want to spend the rest of my life in this motel. I can't do it."

A black man wearing soiled coveralls stands on the sidewalk. He has white curly hair that protrudes from under his black Lakers cap. He has a gentle, sweet demeanor. He staggers around on two bad legs, taking small steps in shoes with untied laces dragging on the ground. He looks like a grandfather and could very well be one, but there is nothing grandfatherly about his

Right: (L-R) A drug user's needle and crack pipe; black tar heroin mixes with water in a cut-off soda can. Photos by Elena Encarnación.



Left: A dirty bathroom, a blood-splattered lamp shade, a grimy window ledge, a browning chair and crisp Bible are glimpses of the inside of motels that Long Beach drug addicts and prostitutes call home. Photos by Elena Encarnación.

occupation.

Gramps, like Jackie, is a long-term resident. Also, like Jackie, he is a drug dealer, according to two sources who wish to remain anonymous. While Jackie does it casually and sporadically, just when she needs to pick up some extra cash to subsidize her disability pay, Gramps does it all day, every day, starting at 6 a.m. and ending sometime before midnight. He is the predominant drug dealer of the motel.

Gramps conducts his business cautiously. He stands at his post, and when a prospective buyer signals that they are interested in making a purchase, he drives with them to another location or hobbles off to a side street.

Another longterm resident is Sleepy, a Latino man who pedals around the neighborhood on his bike with a carefree boyishness that contrasts with his 39 years of age. He is warm, amiable, looks me in the eye when he speaks and listens intently when I talk. He has a sense of humor, and if this motel were a high school, he would be voted Best Personality. But due in part to the crater-like indentations covering his face, he would be the first to tell you he would never be voted Most Handsome. When I ask how he's doing, he jovially responds, "Better than I look."

It's easy to like Sleepy, until you realize he is Soccermom's boyfriend. He is the man whose heroin habit has her selling her body day after day. He is the man who beats her when she can't make enough money for their daily dose. He is the one who complains that she never looks good enough, as if her fading looks were a betrayal to him.

There are many other long-term residents of the motel. There is the old woman who lives in the room next to me. She rarely leaves her room and never talks to anyone. She stands in her window, gazing out the grimy glass which makes her look grey beyond her years. Richard, a man in his fifties, wears Hawaiian shirts and speaks in a loud, booming voice. He is bipolar, a speed addict and is devastated over his son's suicide. I often hear him sobbing in his room, threatening to hang himself. There is another prostitute and addict living in the motel with her boyfriend. Her hair is bleached-blond with black roots and she walks as if she is carrying a watermelon between her knees. When she turns tricks, her boyfriend sits in the van, waiting until she is done with business so he can return to the room they share. Cheri is another prostitute whose stomach is swollen from seven to eight months of pregnancy; she's not sure how far along she is because she hasn't received any prenatal care.

But not everyone lives at the motel. Most of the rooms are rented out for a night or a few hours; men sometimes check-in alone, but they usually don't intend to stay alone.

The Johns—clients of the prostitutes—come in a variety of types from a variety of places. Some gravitate in the same social circles as the residents while others come from middle-class or affluent backgrounds, arriving in their Range Rovers, Mustang convertibles and Suburbans. They come on their lunch breaks, as well as at night. Some park in the motel parking lot or at the liquor store. Some pick up the girls and take them somewhere else. Some rent a room for an hour. They come from Orange County, Belmont Shore and sometimes fresh from a treasure dive in the dumpster.

Some Johns arrive in a good mood and others do not. One night a John pulled up in a new Chevy Tahoe. He parked and left the engine running. He raised his hands and beat them against his forehead, shaking his head from side to side. He was trying to stop himself from what he was about to do, but the urge was too great. He rolled down his window and made the standard call to where I was standing on the balcony.

"Psst. Psst, " he called.

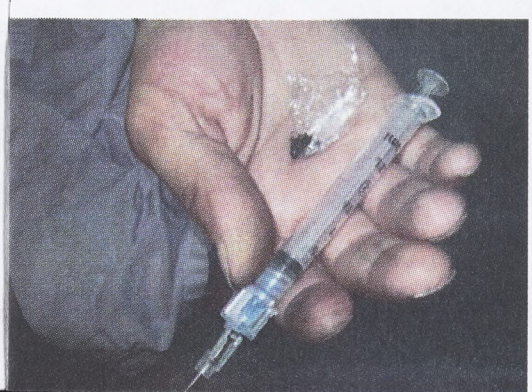
But I subtly let him know I was not for sale.

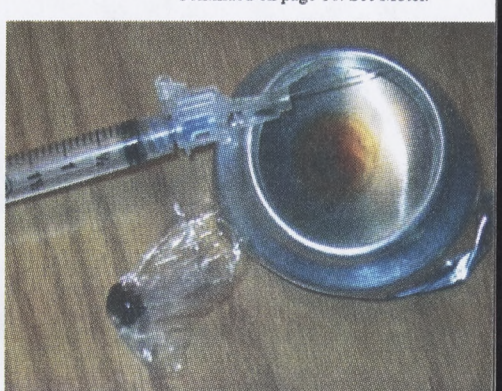
Rejected, he rolled up his window and sped away as if he had already committed a crime. It became clear that what brought him to the motel was not a whim for a good time, but a compulsion that also brought him deep shame. These motels are a meeting ground, where one's addiction to sex feeds off of another's addiction to drugs and vice versa.

Long Beach Police Officer Matt Whybrew patrols this section of PCH and says while addiction to drugs is far more destructive, he has not seen a more powerful addiction than the one to sex and pornography.

Here in East Long Beach, crystal meth is the most prevalent drugs on the street, according to Long Beach Police Officer Jason Wong. Accordingly, this motel is the scene of many meth

Continued on page 16. See Motel.





Making his Mark

By Nicole Yoder

You know if you've seen him. He's the tall professor breaking down gender taboos on campus as he walks through the halls in his homemade slip dresses. With his white beard, long unisex dresses, and the generosity he has spanned the globe to distribute through his Ulan Bator Foundation, he is all at once the Mr. and Mrs. Claus of the developing world.

Retiring professor Arnold Springer wears clothing inspired by Asian culture and women's fashions. Photo by Vishal Goklani.

Sitting in his sparsely decorated office, retiring professor Arnold Springer reaches for a Chanel case, wrinkling his pastel-yellow slip dress. Taking out a pair of gold-rimmed glasses, he jiggles them into place over his smiling blue eyes and rosy cheeks.

A Russian history professor at Cal State Long Beach for 37 years, Springer is not most men. He's willing to give things a try and he finds it's usually worth it. His strongest memory of his mother is her telling him not to care about what anyone else thinks.

He began using clothing to express his moods in the mid-'70s. On his desk, a fading black and white photo of him wearing a suit serves as the only evidence of the professor's style before he found the emotions that arose from clothing.

The well-traveled and recently remarried man whose wife refers to him as "laowai," Chinese for "the foreigner," sits back in all of his taboo-breaking regalia. He casually crosses his legs, which are covered in opaque white tights that run into tan cowboy boots, a lighter shade of the brown fingerless mittens warming his hands. A short-sleeved shirt peeks out from under his V-neck slip dress. His long, white hair is clipped half-up and the rest hidden by the exaggerated Bo Peep bows he wears as a tribute to the characters of Hong Kong soap operas. He describes this outfit as representing sunshine, hope, light and purity.

In 1974, on a stroll through Venice Beach with a friend, Springer took his first step toward challenging what others think about gender norms. As they passed vendors, a pair of dangly earrings caught his eye. He told his friend he wanted to buy them for her, but when she didn't want them, she dared him to buy them for himself. He was reluctant until she asked if he was chicken. Feeling challenged, Springer made the purchase and wore the earrings. It was the first time he considered dabbling in women's attire.

He soon felt the effect his unconventional clothing choices on others.

"I came to school and I could feel that I was really nervous because I had just crossed the taboo, and I was conscious that I was crossing the taboo. In the department the guys looked at me like I was cracked," Springer said. "Females said, 'Arnold that's okay, that's fine,' and that balanced off the negative [response] of the men. So I started to wear those earrings."

Springer had a "Eureka moment" about a year later. His collection of accessories had grown and he began experimenting with different combinations to match his mood.

"[One day,] I put on this one set of earrings, looked in the mirror and thought, 'I don't like that. I liked it before. Why don't I like it now?' So I went and got another pair and I put them in. They were a different color, a different form and I thought, 'Oh that feels better. Now that feels better. How come I like this one now instead of that one?'" Springer asked. "And I realized that was something women understood from early on—deciding what to wear.

"It's like you get in touch with your feelings through clothes and with

on Mongolia and Gender Norms

jewelry. You put on what you feel like and what you want to project. I said, 'Oh, that's really liberating to be able to be in touch that way because you can project your energy, and men don't know that.' That's terrible that men don't get to learn that, and women do. I've seen women wear men's clothes, but men can't wear women's clothes. Why? Who made that decision and when did that get made?" Springer asked.

Springer realized he would not be the first man in history to wear a skirt, which encouraged him even more. Springer began sewing his own outfits that flattered his body and fit him comfortably. He sewed shapes over his silk slip dresses to create the illusion of a waist and hips.

"I try to simulate the figure [of a woman] by creating an hourglass panel inset on the silk. I stole the idea from a Russian opera designer," Springer said.

He also borrows ideas from Chinese fashions.

"Whenever I go to China or Mongolia they say, 'You stole that from us. You're a Mongol.' The Chinese think the way that I dress looks like the Mongols. Sometimes they think that I took it from the Chinese. The Chinese have a rich fashion style and I did profit from that."

The only person who ever expressed concern over his attire was a colleague, Springer said. But, even that was not really an issue.

"One of the professors [asked me], 'Aren't you concerned that the way you dress will turn students away?' I told him it didn't matter to me if students are turned off by that. That's OK. I don't necessarily need students," Springer said.

"How a person looks has nothing to do with what they're teaching," he said.

The university has recognized this and has not interfered with the way he dresses or his teaching style.

"The department has been good to me. I have never been reprimanded or criticized, so I'm happy," Springer said.

The department is one of the things he said he will miss the most when he retires. He said there is a special harmony in the history department, a cooperation among decent people that has made him happy over the years. The two other things he knows he will miss are the students and former President Robert C. Maxson, who he says put in a special effort to make sure things on campus.

Reflecting on his past, Springer confides that, like his clothing, the nonprofit group, Ulan Bator Foundation, he founded to help Mongolians began with a girl.

In 1989, while traveling through Morocco, Springer met a woman.

"We liked each other," he said with a happy sigh.

They planned to go on a grueling trek together, but before they could leave, she broke her ankle.

Springer became involved in studying the country and went alone, arriving a month after the Mongolians won a peaceful revolution divorcing them from communist control.

"Everybody was very happy and excited. I could feel that," Springer said. "I was on a short tour where there were six people and we traveled around the country. I was taken by what I saw: a pre-modern place, no fences, hardly any roads, no billboards, no clutter, just vast, open space. . .and lots of people riding around on horses and living in tents."

Springer says he became "smitten" with Mongolia and its people.

"I was very excited about this place because I thought, here is a country that just gained its freedom after many years of total isolation and subjugation by the Russians and Chinese, over 200 years, and their culture is still preserved," Springer said.

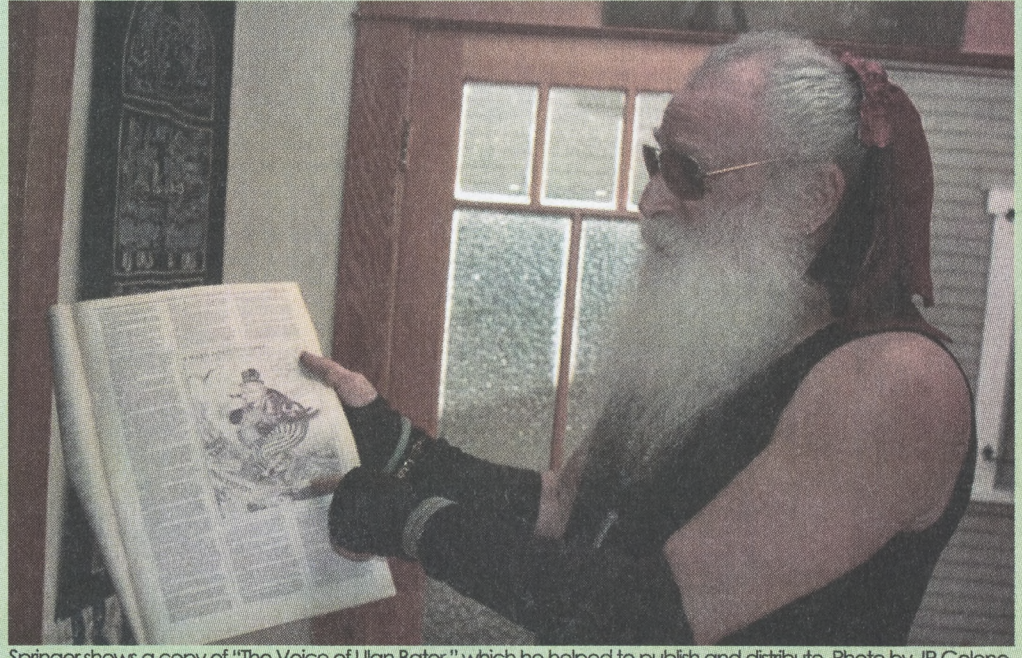
Springer had spent many years doing community activism, the thought of which makes him nudge his glasses up and rub his eyes, as if he is tired just remembering his volunteer work.

"I had grown weary of that political and sociological enterprise," he said. "I thought I had learned as much as I could about democracy and community. I didn't want to repeat things."

Springer saw Mongolia as an opportunity to do something on a broader scale and he left feeling motivated. He wanted to show the world that pre-modern cultures could enter a post-modern situation and become creative and powerful.

Springer returned to Venice Beach, where he has sat on town and neighborhood councils to help the community and developers agree on projects. He has fought for public beach access and low income housing. Upon returning, he found he had won an out-of-court settlement with a development company.

Continued on page 16. See Springer.



Springer shows a copy of "The Voice of Ulan Bator," which he helped to publish and distribute. Photo by JR Goleno.

Here at Dig, we know how important it is to step back from the books and live a little. In this section, count on us to bring you an innovative look at entertainment, a guide to help you survive college, and to take you to near and far away places.

DIG UNDERGROUND

THE [illegible] FINALS
It's [illegible] up on Scantron
drinks and [illegible] to-make meals for [illegible]
week.

DIG MAY

Your guide to concerts, movies, on-campus events and local happenings

1
Bleed the Sky - Showcase Theatre, **7:30 p.m.**

2
Imogen Heap - Glass House, **7:30 p.m.**

3

5
"Hoot"
"Mission: Impossible III"

Morningwood - Roxy Theatre, **8 p.m.**

6
KIIS FM Wango Tango - Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre, **5 p.m.**

7
Punchline - Chain Reaction, **7:30 p.m.**

8
Angels and Airwaves - Troubadour, **7:30 p.m.**

9
Mute Math - El Rey Theatre, **8 p.m.**

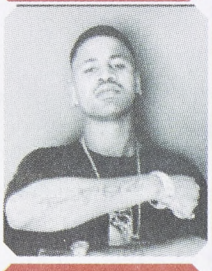
10
Boy Set Fire - Chain Reaction, **7:30 p.m.**

11
Suicide Machines - Troubadour, **7:30 p.m.**

12
"Alpha Dog"
"Just My Luck"

Free Fridays at the Long Beach Museum of Art amd Museum of Latin American Art

14
Juvenile - HOB Sunset, **8 p.m.**



16
Rise Against - Troubadour, **7 p.m.**

17
River City High - Chain Reaction, **7:30 p.m.**

19
"The Da Vinci Code"
"Over The Hedge"

Project 86 - Chain Reaction, **7:30 p.m.**

Sick Of It All - Glass House, **7 p.m.**

20
The Long Beach Lesbian and Gay Pride Festival and Parade in Downtown Long Beach.

Free Family Children's Performance at the International City Theatre.

21
Further Seems Forever - HOB Anaheim, **7:30 p.m.**

22
Madonna - The Forum, **8 p.m.**

24
The Matches - Chain Reaction, **7 p.m.**

T.I. - HOB Anaheim, **7 p.m.**

26
"X-Men: The Last Stand"

Downtown Farmers Market, every Friday at the Promenade.

27
Ozomatli - HOB Anaheim, **8 p.m.**

28
The New Amsterdams - Chain Reaction, **7:30 p.m.**

30
Pinback - Avalon Hollywood, **9 p.m.**

31
Steven Seagal - El Rey Theatre, **7:30 p.m.**

Force of Change sets the Rock Record Straight

By Ilan Cloud

Rock 'n' roll without sex and drugs—is that even possible? Pop culture and the rock-star persona would suggest otherwise, but hardcore band Force of Change is working to dispel that myth along with the rest of Southern California's straight edge following.

In appearance, they look similar to rock/punk bands like AFI or Blink 182 with simple T-shirts, jean fashion, plenty of tattoos and the noticeable large black plugs stretching ears lobes as big as quarters. However, what makes straight edge hardcore music so different is its beliefs.

At first glance, the straight edge scene may seem bizarre compared to contemporary pop culture standards.

"Straight edge is about living a clean life by not using any drugs or alcohol or smoking. It's about respecting your body and life and respecting the lives of people around you," said Sam Robertson, Force of Change bassist and CSULB student.

The straight edge scene is popular with younger people. Most discover the lifestyle during high school when teenagers are likely to be experimenting with drinking, drugs and sex. The values attract young people because it helps them avoid peer pressure.

The straight edge movement in the hardcore scene stemmed from early punk rock in the 80's sparked by minor threat song, "Straight Edge," about living a life free of vices like drugs and alcohol.

"This really struck a chord with a lot of kids and they ran with it," Robertson said. "It became this whole subculture of the burgeoning hardcore scene that was stemming from punk rock."

Another attraction to the scene is the unity formed with band members and fans. It is very common to see a band on the same level as the audience. They sing along and dance with the musicians, which is another reason Robertson and so many others are attracted to the scene. Force of Change strives to create the same atmosphere.

"Every band played on the floor and kids would sing along and be standing right there with the band sharing the microphone," Robertson said. "There was a sense of equality."

Force of Change formed last summer and immediately started playing shows. They quickly released a four-song demo and are planning to tour this summer to promote their upcoming full length album, to be released by Indecision Records.

So, can rock exist without the sex and drugs? It may depend on who you ask. Our culture places rock stars on pedestals, treats them as celebrities and even creates idols of them. We accept their eccentric lifestyles and drug addictions which only serve to isolate them even further. Rock is just another form of art, as the writer Henry Miller put it, "places our finger on the great pulse of existence." The ideals of straight edger's run contrary to pop culture but, in doing so, they've found a form of rock that shuns distractions and places its finger as close as possible to that screaming pulse.

Check out the demo tracks and get more info about Force of Change from their Web site, www.forceofchange.com.

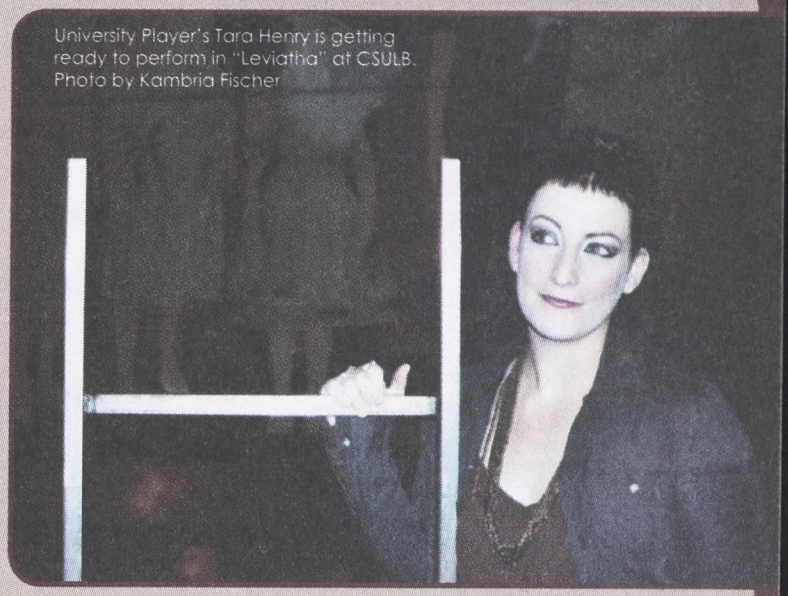
Force of Change at Chain Reaction. Photo courtesy of Sam Robertson

PROFESSORS ROCK OUT

Your English professor may be hipper than you think. Since 2004, Lickerish has been performing their blues-rock sound in local clubs around the LA/OC area. Lickerish is comprised of Tom Bowman and two of CSULB's English faculty members, Lloyd Kermode and Gary Griswald. For more information about Lickerish and their new album "Gasoline" go to www.lickerishmusic.com.

Center of Attention —and the Stage

By Kambria Fischer



University Player's Tara Henry is getting ready to perform in "Leviatha" at CSULB. Photo by Kambria Fischer

I was chosen to play "Petruccio" in "Taming of the Shrew" for my high school's Shakespeare Festival. My obnoxious role as a drunken buffoon earned me the best actress award for our sophomore class. Go figure. I thought I had some natural talent and had finally won the praise of my fellow classmates until my best friend landed the lead role in "The Sound of Music" later that year. She could sing, dance and act—and she looked good doing it.

Watching my triple threat of a best friend steal the show night after night, I learned to respect real actors. In a society where a two-page spreads in US Weekly measures star-status instead of skill, not everyone gets the privilege to witness a bona-fide professional. So, I set out to shed some light on the misperceived "drama queens."

I knew Cal State Long Beach theater major Tara Henry was serious about her business when I watched her perform in the University Players' version of "Titus Andronicus" at CSULB's Studio Theatre. I was impressed with the actors and the director's angle on the famous tragedy, but even more so with Henry's versatility as the leading male role of Titus.

Henry isn't a novice—Titus is only one of an many characters under her belt, including Signora Laura in "Doctor Harlequin," Eva in "Thieves' Carnival," Rosie in "Better Places to Go," Scarecrow in "The Wizard of Oz" and an Italian opera singer in "Commedia dell' Arte."

Henry found her calling at age 15 in her first theater class in Fulsom. Her first acting teacher became her mentor and helped pull her out of her shell.

"I've had so many teachers that have challenged me over the years," Henry said. "They taught me discipline, not just skills. It forced me to find my real sense of self."

But don't be fooled. Acting didn't come easily for Henry. In 10 years on stage, she has honed her craft in about 30 shows and six films, not including a number of short showcase performances with the University Players.

Henry visited CSULB after reading an article praising the university's theater program. Two years later, she is one of the most active members in the school's theater group

"Coming to [CSULB] has been the biggest milestone in my life so far," Henry said. "I am constantly testing my ability as an actor. It's amazing how far I've come, yet there's still so much to learn."

A typical day for Henry starts at 6:30 a.m. Class is in the morning, rehearsals are in the evening, and somewhere in between, Henry finds time to do customer care at Commercial Landscape Supply. She's lucky if she gets to bed before 2 a.m.

This routine continues for weeks before performances begin. Add on time to do make-up, costumes and homework, and that's one long week.

"It bothers me that people think [acting is] an easy craft," Henry said. "It's not just a hobby. I work hard at what I do and I'm constantly being challenged."

Henry proves to be devoted to her work and, as with any profession or hobby, the most dedicated people are likely to be stereotyped. A typical actor is known to be loud, aggressive and obviously dramatic. Henry admits to living up to the name.

"There are some truths in stereotypes," Henry said. "You can't be shy, or mumble or not like being the center of attention if you want to be an actor."

Henry's parents were the first to criticize her love of the theater. Her dad wanted her to pursue business technology school.

"I have trouble with simple addition, so I knew technology wasn't right for me," Henry said. "I think they were just worried I would be a starving waitress for the rest of my life."

It wasn't until her parents came to a show that they realized how serious she was about acting.

"It's like being in love," she said. "I love having the power to captivate an audience. You never know what's going to happen on stage. I have met so many different people. It feels like home."

As for the future, Henry plans to continue acting and has always wanted to open a children's theater with her best friend.

"If I've learned anything about acting, it's that you need to have an open mind to new ideas," Henry said. "The same is true for life in general. People need to experience it to the fullest and love what they do."

For tickets to see Henry perform as Landlord in "Leviatha," or for more information or tickets for University Players, call (562) 985-5526 or visit www.csulb.edu/depts/theatre.

'There are some truths in stereotypes. You can't be shy, or mumble or not like being the center of attention if you want to be an actor.'

Dressing it Up

This final's week, don't get caught up in plain turkey and cheese sandwiches just because they are fast and cheap. Try some of these zesty substitutions to add flavor and excitement to the ordinary sandwich.

By Gabrielle Kent

Spiffy Spreads

Alternatives to mayonnaise

- Hummus
- Pesto
- Flavored mayo (Wasabi is always interesting)
- Flavored cream cheese
- Mustards—Sweet and Hot, Dijon and Jalapeño

Bountiful Breads

Give up your ordinary loaf

- Pitas
- Flavored Tortillas
- Hoagie Rolls
- Flavored Bagels
- Rolls

Tasty Toppers

- Sunflower seeds
- Pepperonchini
- Bacon
- Salt and pepper
- Vinegar and oil
- Olives
- Cheeses—bleu, havarti, jalapeno jack, goat cheese
- Hot sauce
- Spinach
- Grilled Onions
- Sprouts
- Avocado
- Sun dried tomatoes
- Pickled artichokes
- Salad dressings
- Shredded veggies
- Vary your meat selection—chicken breast, salami, prosciutto, shredded turkey
- Fresh herbs

Some sandwich ideas...

Greek Pita (Vegetarian)

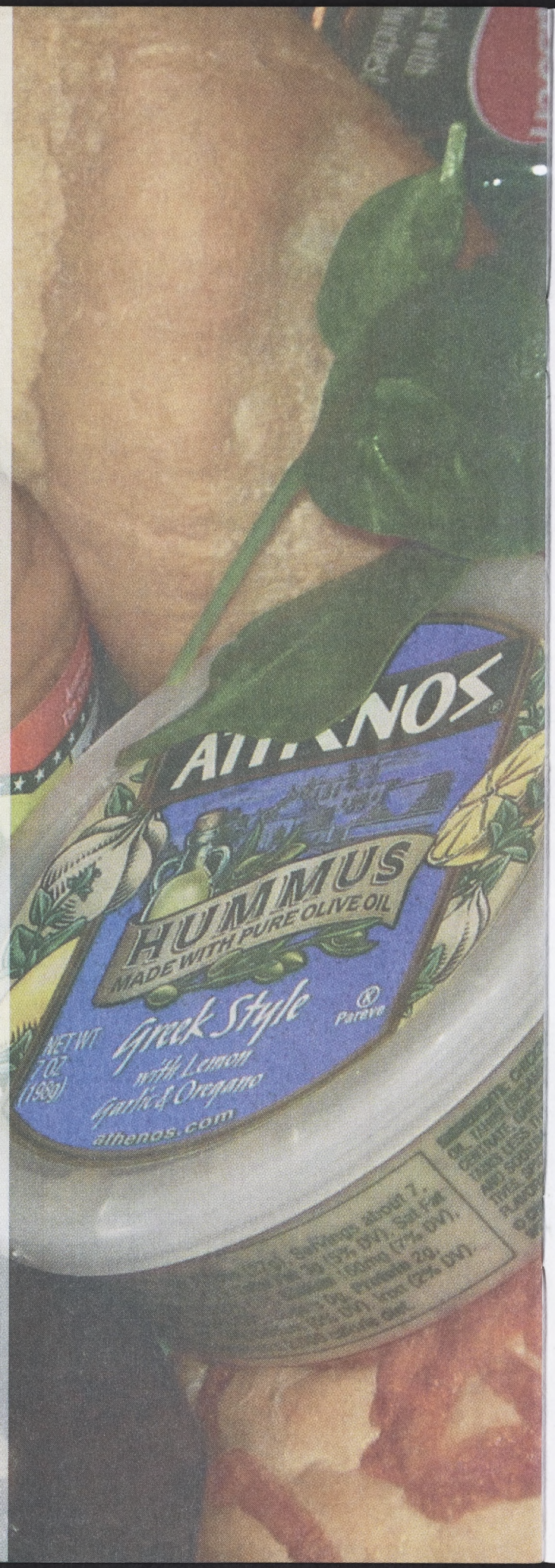
Slice pita in half and toast. Toss chopped romaine lettuce, kalamata olives, pepperonchinis, tomatoes, cucumber, garbanzo beans and feta cheese with oil and red wine vinegar and a pinch of dried oregano. Add salt and pepper to taste and fill pita.

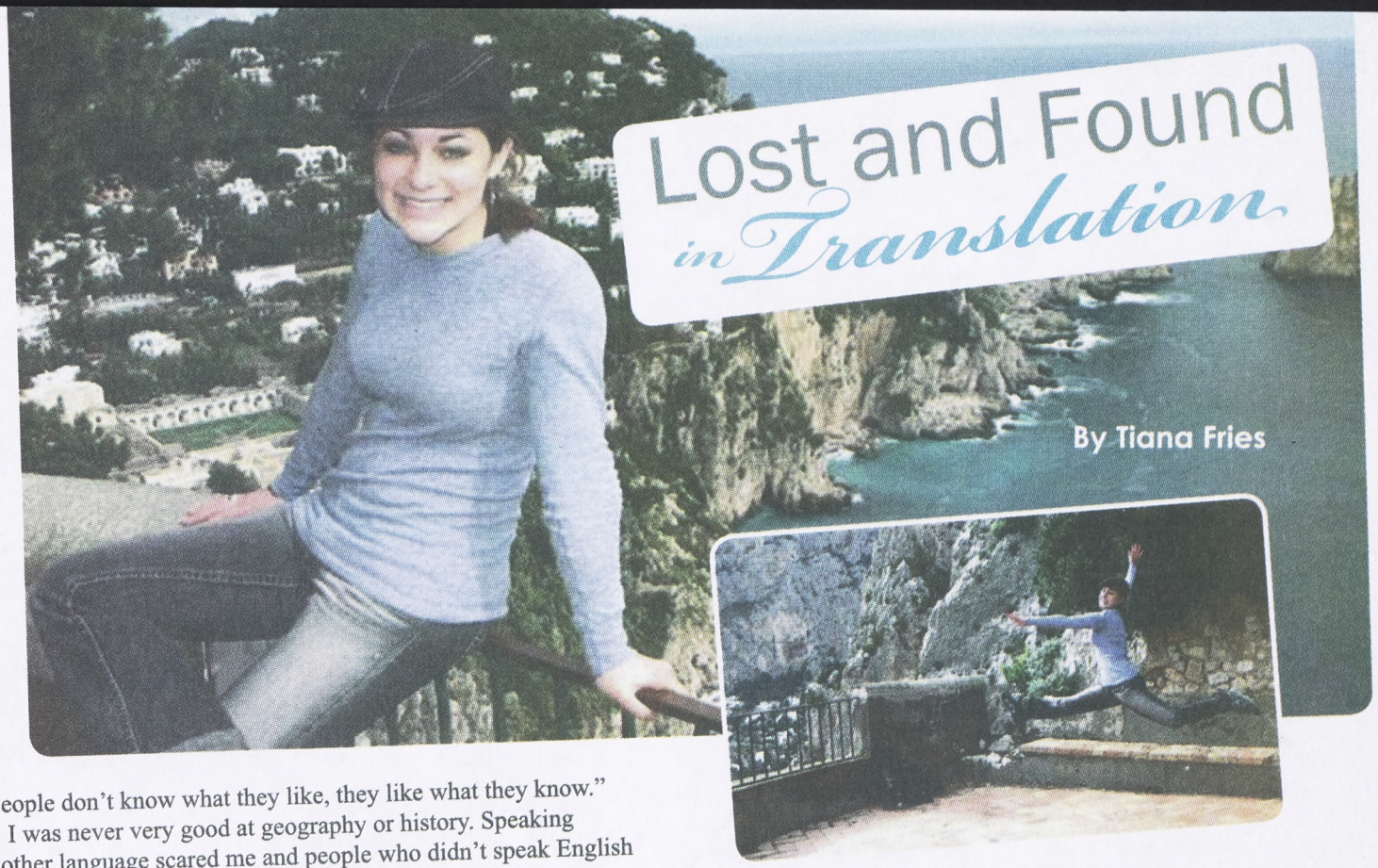
Tortilla Roll-Up

Spread your favorite cream cheese on any flavor of tortilla. Add spinach, diced sun dried tomatoes, chopped chicken breast, and a drizzle of pesto.

Adult Grilled Cheese

Lightly butter the outside of two slices of dark bread. If you can, get walnut bread. Rye or pumpernickel would also work nicely. Heat your George Foreman Grill. Place bleu cheese in between the two slices of bread with the butter on the outside. Slice a ripe pear and place on top of the cheese. Sprinkle with red pepper flakes and grill until brown.





Lost and Found *in Translation*

By Tiana Fries

"People don't know what they like, they like what they know."

I was never very good at geography or history. Speaking another language scared me and people who didn't speak English somehow seemed unintelligent or unfriendly.

With a craving for an escape, as well as a desire for something new, I stepped out of my comfort zone my sophomore year at CSULB and committed a year to the unknown world of Florence, Italy. It felt so empowering to sign the lease to an apartment and move in with American girls, with no previous experience of the country or the language.

There were many challenges that arose early on. Practicing Italian was often difficult, especially with vendors who addressed us in English because we would be in groups dressed in our surfer brands and tennis shoes, or even just because we smiled politely. Making Italian friends was difficult as well because the girls seemed unapproachable, and the guys tend to pursue much more than just a conversation.

Slowly but surely, I was able to practice the language more, as well as learn a great deal about myself. I got accepted into an Italian Art Academy which allowed me more frequent contact with Italian students.

After experiencing what it feels like to be on the other side, I will be much more inviting to future students in my classes who do not speak English as a first language. Contrary to what some people believe, the inability to communicate intellectual thoughts due to a limited vocabulary does not makes anyone less intelligent.

Living here has made me realize how much of my personality relies on my ability to be quick-witted, humorous or interrogative. Normally I am very social, but the conversation barrier has prevented me from approaching Italian artists. I often feel invisible. But, with my lowered inhibitions, I find myself painting whatever I feel like, without attempting to impress anyone.

I have also observed many differences between American and Italian cultures. Italians eat a lot of bread, potatoes and pasta and think you are nuts when you try to explain the concept of an "Atkins" diet.

I have yet to see an obese Italian. Why? They walk everywhere! I haven't driven a car in nine months. It was exhausting at first. In California city lay-outs accomodate to the convenience of having an automobile. But here, I walk to the nearest *supermercato* to get my fresh produce and whatever else I am able to carry back home. There is no Costco where you can do a one-stop shop for the next few months.

I still haven't completely adapted to the metric system, but the colorful "Monopoly" money seems more normal than the long U.S. dollars that have been hidden from my sight for so long.

I have joked with fellow students that the experience of studying abroad ages you 10 years. I have reached new highs: smelling the freshest air of the Swiss Alps, watching a front row Olympic hockey game, taking a midnight Vespa ride in Elba island, experiencing an authentic Flamenco show in Spain, spending New Year's Eve in Paris and visiting places I had only read about in history books. My aptitude for learning, feeling and observing the world around me has increased. Most of the difficulties I had foreseen and prepared for weren't as challenging as unexpected ones lurking around the corner.

I have learned more about what I am made of. Forcing myself out of my comfort zone has encouraged me to continue stretching myself, and made me realize how many possibilites there are for where my life can go. I have discovered new favorites, and re-realized some of the old that were absent long enough for my heart to grow fond of them. I can not imagine what my life would be like had I not chosen to dedicate nine months of it to Florence. I now have many more unique experiences to draw from when relating to people from different backgrounds. Seeing the world outside the comfortable bubble of Southern California life has been incredibly rewarding.

Motel; continued from page 7

parties. Men often check-in alone, with a supply and the expectation that there will be some female tweaker who will want an invitation. Here, meth—also known as speed, crank, ice or crystal—is often currency for sex.

The reasons or events that caused Soccermom and Sleepy to get hooked on heroin are not so clear. Soccermom has never explicitly admitted she is both a junkie and a prostitute. She implies it with vague statements about how her "life hasn't always been like this." She makes references to her police record, but is too ashamed to say anything outright.

Initially, Sleepy doesn't seem like he's ashamed. He talks about his drug use as if it were a way of living life to its fullest, that each high is a party, rather than self-destruction. But one night when I pay a visit to the couple in the room they share, just after Sleepy has shot up, I realize this is just an act. The room is dark when I enter and the television provides the only light. Sleepy sits on the bed, with his feet planted firmly on the floor. He is sweaty and looks old. The merry mischief that seems to twinkle and dance in his eyes when we normally talk is nowhere to be seen. He sits on the bed, talking, but not looking at me. It is as if the room is spinning around him, and he is trying to get his bearings by keeping his feet firmly planted on the floor. I don't see any euphoria. He's trying to hide in the darkness but for the first time since I've known him, I can really see him.

Later that night, Soccermom tells me she needs to talk if I don't mind. But the conversation doesn't happen. She is busy running everywhere, getting money, getting food, getting drugs for her and her man. The next day and the day after that she mentions she is going to stop by my room for our talk. But that talk never happens.

Near the end of my stay, Soccermom was picked up by the wrong John. He was a vice detective. She was arrested. Sleepy says she won't be getting out. Jackie says Soccermom had been warmed previously by police to stay off the streets, but taking care of Sleepy was her first priority.

I was in my room when the police took her away, and though my door was wide open, I peeked through a hole in the curtains to spare her any further humiliation. They handcuffed her and put her in the backseat of the squad car. She sat slumped down in the seat. Only her face from her eyes up showed through the car window. I noticed that her eyes were big and fixed on my open door.

Sleepy is not doing so well. Without a meal ticket, he has been sleeping on the street, pawning everything he has, even his bike. He is always shaking, always pale. His pain and suffering is palpable. At first I had some concerns about continuing to interact with a desperate heroin addict in the throws of withdrawal, but the more I see him, the less of a threat he appears to be. He is pathetic, sweet and good mannered in his begging. In spite of all I know about him, his actions are almost enough to make him likeable again.

Without a place to live, Sleepy has given me a few of his belongings to hold on to. Sticking out of a plastic shopping bag is a notebook containing the Serenity Prayer, a verse recited at Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and other organizations dealing with addictions. At the bottom of the page is the acronym SAF, which stands for The Substance Abuse Foundation, Inc.—a state licensed, certified and accredited facility that provides in and out patient substance abuse and alcohol treatment, housing and supportive services. SAF says it is the largest provider of these services in the Long Beach and South Bay area, serving 2,000 people yearly.

It is clear there is help for addicts who seek it. But at the motel the sense of apathy is so overwhelming that it is no surprise its residence would rather drown in self-destruction than save themselves. Rather than breeding grounds for addiction, crack motels seem to be a breeding ground for contentment in discontent. Crack motels are places where those who have given up hope can wallow in filth and self-imposed degradation. Becoming a resident of one of these motels indicates someone has hit rock bottom; and when he or she doesn't have a significant sense of self-worth, there is little motivation to embark on the arduous task of pulling one's self up and checking-out.

Springer; continued from page 8

With Mongolia still near his heart, the guidance of his lawyer and $200,000 to be spent on a nonprofit, he founded the Ulan Bator Foundation, named after the capitol of Mongolia. In Washington, D.C., Springer met with the Mongolian ambassador and other officials who helped guide his decisions on how to spend the money.

"I attended their conferences [and] appeared in my clothes," he said. "I sort of broke the monotony of their lives, you know? And they liked me. I still have good relations with all of those people."

Two years later Springer returned to Mongolia and visited a children's hospital.

Springer was saddened by the scenes of children in hospital beds, tubes draining from their arms and stomachs into pots on the floor.

"They were so brave," he said.

Then he had an idea.

"It was so simple. They didn't have the simplest things for care. And I thought, 'Maybe this is what I should do. I should get in touch with some of the medical people in Los Angeles and somehow arrange a medical exchange to bring medical people to Mongolia and somehow do something.'"

As Springer was leaving Mongolia, a doctor found him and gave him a picture of an 11-year-old girl. An attached note told how she had undergone a botched surgical procedure that damaged her uterus and bladder. Russian doctors had been unable to repair the damage and the doctor asked for Springer's help.

Back in Venice, Springer contacted Richard MacKenzie, the director of adolescent medicine for the Children's Hospital in Los Angeles. MacKenzie said he would see the girl if Springer could cover the airfare.

After visiting the girl in Mongolia, MacKenzie told Springer he would gather the best team of surgeons to help her if the Ulan Bator Foundation could fly her to L.A., which it did, along with with her mother and a translator.

"They've fixed her. So it was a success," Springer said. "Everybody was happy and out of that came the whole involvement of the L.A. County Medical Association and especially the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles' Dr. MacKenzie, who fell in love with Mongolia."

MacKenzie and other doctors have since been working with the Ulan Bator Foundation, making yearly trips to improve medical conditions in Mongolia.

Springer has visited Mongolia more times than he can count and is excited to return next summer. He respects the people of Mongolia and they respect him.

After nearly four decades of teaching at CSULB, Springer has not only gained the respect of the Mongols, but the respect of many colleagues and students at CSULB, and doesn't plan on leaving for good. Though he is ready for retirement, he plans to return for interesting lectures and to use the school library to work on his pet project—writing a chronology of Venice Beach.

"I'll be sad not to be coming back here [to CSULB] three times a week," Springer said. "I [have come] here three times a week for 37 years; down the 405, up Bellflower, underneath the beautiful alley of trees, onto the campus with the wonderful young people and flowers and peach trees blooming. My God, what a wonderful life. What a wonderful life it was."

Good Luck with Finals

-Dig